

# **Annual Report 2004-2005**



**Arkansas**  
**Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force**



## Message from the Governor

For many Arkansas businesses and residents, it was another good year to live in the Natural State. Despite the national economic downturn, numerous new businesses were started. With more and more companies choosing to make Arkansas their home, the future continues to look bright.

Unfortunately, the economic recession and even technology changes affected some Arkansans. When plants closed and layoffs occurred, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force was there to provide the necessary information and services for those needing assistance.



The Task Force, which has gained national recognition for its work, is led by the Department of Workforce Services and provides services through contracts with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development and the Arkansas AFL-CIO.

As soon as notification of a layoff or closure is received, the Task Force takes action. Employer meetings, worker assistance workshops, job fairs and training are among the services the Task Force provides as assistance during these difficult situations.

Certainly, no one wants to see businesses close. But when it happens, the Task Force is there to help not only the workers but also the community heal. This report will tell you more about the Task Force's many services.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Mike Huckabee'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force

The GDWTF was formed in response to the passage of the federal Job Training Partnership Act in the early 1980s. It is funded under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Specifically, the WIA provides assistance for retraining through on-the-job training and/or institutional training. It also provides for basic readjustment and support services, needs-based payments and other services.

The directors of three state agencies and a labor organization comprise the membership of the GDWTF:

**Artee Williams**, Department of Workforce Services (DWS);

**John C. Wyvill**, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE);

**Larry W. Walther**, Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED); and

**Alan Hughes**, Arkansas AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations).

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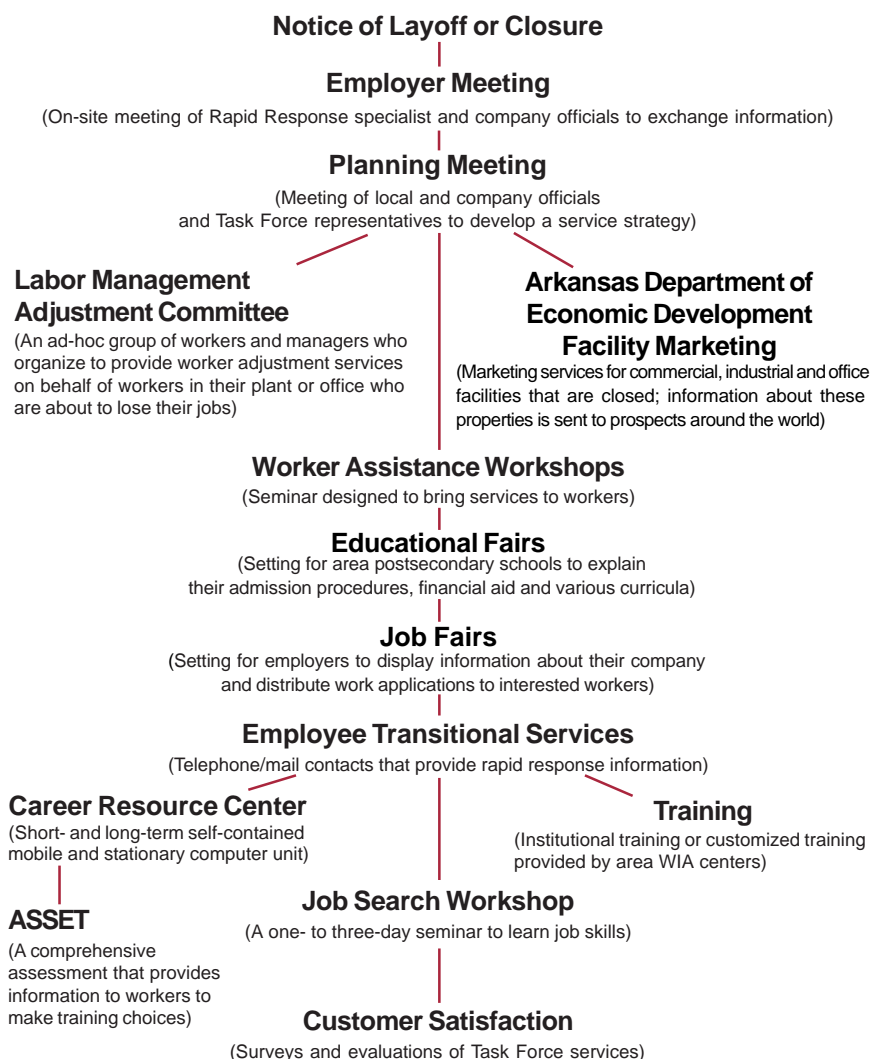
The Department of Workforce Services is the lead agency and grant recipient for the Task Force. Members of the Task Force include the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, and the Arkansas AFL-CIO. This partnership between the private and public sectors is committed to assisting individual workers and their communities when dislocation occurs.

Changing technology, foreign competition and manufacturing downsizing cause many workers to lose their jobs. Dislocated workers tend to be older and need further education, as well as upgrades in their job skills. In many cases, they also have family and community ties that limit their options for relocation.

The GDWTF members and staff are committed to offering the workers of Arkansas the support and training they need to meet their future challenges.

# Task Force Linkages

The Task Force response to dislocations is a coordinated multi-agency effort to provide early intervention services to affected workers. An in-depth process is followed to conduct meetings with the employer, the community and the affected workers. The following Task Force Activity Chart outlines the plan of action developed for dislocations:



## Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force Directors



**Artee Williams**, Department of Workforce Services (formerly the Employment Security Department): “The Governor’s Dislocated Workers Task Force is a vital component of the Arkansas workforce system. The Task Force assists employers with layoff aversons. If a layoff cannot be averted, the Task Force helps employers apply for Trade Adjustment Assistance when appropriate so qualified workers can receive essential training for new ca-

reers. Dislocated workers can also receive assistance with Unemployment Insurance claim filing, resume preparation, job search and job placement. The Task Force is committed to providing workforce services and solutions for workers and employers around the state.”

**Dr. Steve Franks**, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education: “Partnerships, rapid response and a dedicated interagency team are what make the Task Force so effective in assisting Arkansans to redirect their lives following a company layoff or a plant closure.

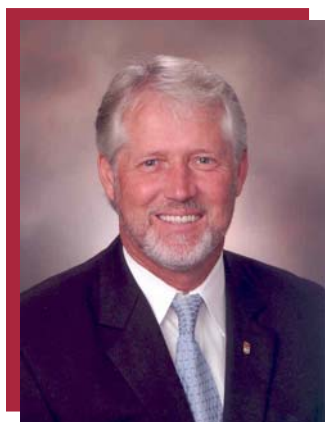
“Our department is committed to helping workers through meaningful skills assessment, counseling and placement in appropriate workforce development programs.” (John C. Wyvill succeeded Dr. Franks as director of the Department of Workforce Education in 2005.)



## Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force Directors

**Larry W. Walther**, Arkansas Department of Economic Development: "When a plant closes and employees are laid off, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force immediately mobilizes to help the workers and communities.

"The many partners who are involved in this effort have worked together for years, each with a unique role. The Arkansas Department of Economic Development markets the closed facility and equipment, recruits businesses that will bring new jobs to the area and arranges training for the new workforce. We want to assure Arkansans that we are there to help."



**Alan Hughes**, Arkansas AFL-CIO: "Now more than ever, the Arkansas AFL-CIO and our affiliates are committed to sustaining our 22-year role in the partnership between labor, government, business, apprenticeships, training and education providers and community organizations, working together to make certain that Arkansas workers have the necessary resources for re-employment assistance and related social services.

"The united effort of the Task Force members and other agencies in developing and delivering the tools needed by dislocated workers to aid them in finding jobs, or new career fields, will continue."

# Task Force Services

- **Early Detection and Intervention** – Through a statewide network and continuous monitoring of labor market information, the Task Force can identify most closings and substantial layoffs in advance. To lessen the impact of dislocation, the Task Force immediately meets with employers on-site to provide information about services available to the affected workers.
- **Community Involvement** – As soon as information is received of a closure or a substantial layoff, the Task Force contacts company officials. A planning meeting is scheduled with local elected officials and business leaders to create action plans that coordinate the resources available in the local area and assist the community and the dislocated workers.
- **Labor Management Adjustment Committees** – The Task Force assists in the formation and operation of labor-management committees. Members of these committees are evenly divided between workers and managers with a neutral chairperson. Their purpose is to determine workers' needs and start the process of providing pre-layoff assistance, such as stress seminars, financial management guidance and job search information.
- **Department of Workforce Services and Workforce Investment Office Support (Arkansas Workforce Centers or One-Stop Centers)** – Staff from the local offices are present at most workshops. They also assist with assessments, career counseling, labor market information, job placement, training or retraining with possible financial assistance.
- **Vacated Facilities Marketing** – The Task Force provides marketing services for commercial, industrial and office facilities that are closed. Information about these properties is sent to prospects around the world.
- **Worker Assistance Workshops** – The Task Force conducts worker assistance workshops to advise dislocated workers on retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, stress management, credit counseling, insurance needs and job search tips. Worker assistance workshops also give the dislocated worker valuable information for establishing successful re-employment plans.
- **Career Assessment and Counseling** – Dislocated workers' needs are evaluated through an assessment, counseling and development of an individual re-employment plan. Those in need of basic education and/or training are referred to the appropriate provider.



# Task Force Services

- **Educational Fairs** – The Task Force provides educational fairs at which area postsecondary schools explain their admission procedures, financial aid, various curricula and any other helpful information.
- **Emergency Disaster Relief Centers** – The Rapid Response motor coaches are equipped with gasoline-powered generators to serve areas in case of emergencies. The motor coaches may be driven to locations and used as temporary offices to organize disaster teams, to serve as command centers for relief workers, to take unemployment insurance claims, to assist state agencies with the public when there is a power outage due to the weather or to help with any other disaster or emergency situation.
- **Job Fairs** – When appropriate, the Task Force coordinates a job fair so affected workers and local employers can meet concerning current job openings. Employers with available positions are invited to attend the fair, display information about their company and distribute work applications to interested workers. Job fairs have proven to be an effective tool in serving dislocated workers and the community.
- **Information** – The Task Force staff consistently tracks new industrial plant locations and expansion of established industrial facilities. Lists of jobs and training opportunities are kept current, and occupational and labor market information is provided as needed or requested. The staff also provides consultation and shares information among the Task Force members regarding economic development and labor management relations.
- **Mobile Career Resource Centers** – One stationary unit and two traveling units can be located at worksites to provide instruction designed for dislocated workers to enhance their employability skills. These units are assigned to company sites prior to a layoff or closure or are centrally located after a company closes.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)** – The Task Force coordinates assistance for workers affected by foreign imports. TAA includes a variety of benefits and re-employment services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for training, a job search allowance, a relocation allowance and other re-employment services. Additionally, weekly Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) may be payable to eligible workers following their exhaustion of unemployment benefits. TRA benefits are payable to individuals who have approved training, have completed approved training or have a waiver of the training requirement.

# Worker Assistance Workshops Locations & Companies 2004-2005

## **Arkadelphia**

General Brake  
Morse Automotive  
Value Line Supply Co.

## **Batesville**

Eastman Chemical Co.

## **Benton**

Ruffin Molding

## **Cherokee Village**

Eastern Ozarks Regional Hospital

## **Conway**

Kimberly Clark  
Snap-On Tools

## **Corning**

Hart Furniture Manufacturing Co.

## **DeQueen**

Weyerhaeuser

## **El Dorado**

Cooper Standard Automotive  
Prescolite  
Southern Folder & Index

## **Fayetteville**

Cooper Power Systems

## **Harrisburg**

Jarvis Caster Co.

## **Heber Springs**

Robert Bosch Tool Corp.

## **Hope**

Bruner Ivory Handle Co.  
Klipsch, LLC.  
Meyer's Bakery

## **Hot Springs**

Hitech Comact  
Temple Industries (A.D. Harrington)

## **Jonesboro**

Colson Caster of Jonesboro  
General Electric Corp.  
Haworth, Inc.

## **Kensett**

Armstrong Wood Products

## **Little Rock**

Celestica Corp.  
GC Services  
Regions Center  
Sterling Department Store

## **Monticello**

Burlington Rug Corp.

## **Mountain Home**

Baxter Healthcare Corp.

## **Paragould**

Walsh Heartland, Inc.

## **Pine Bluff**

Varco-Purden Buildings

## **Pocahontas**

Whitewood Industries

## **Russellville**

Farm Credit Services of  
Western Arkansas

## **Searcy**

Kohler Co.  
Twin River Foods

## **Stamps**

Alan White Co.

## **Texarkana**

General Electric Railcar

## **Trumann**

Parker-Hannifin

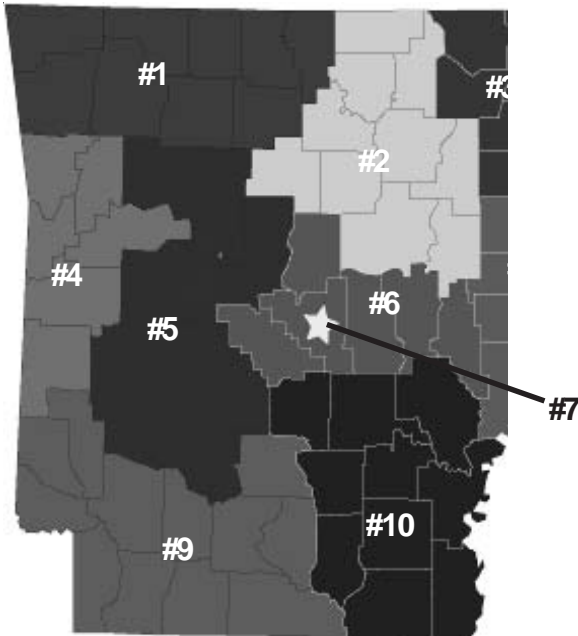
## **Wynne**

Addison Shoe Co.  
Mueller Copper Products

## 2004-2005 Task Force Worker Assistance Workshops

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force coordinated 73 Worker Assistance Workshops; approximately 4,560 workers were affected by downsizing and closures. Approximately 3,100 attended the Worker Assistance Workshops.

### TOTAL SERVED PER WORKFORCE AREA:



- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Northwest Arkansas - 302       | 6. Central Arkansas - 68     |
| 2. North Central Arkansas - 1,009 | 7. Little Rock - 447         |
| 3. Northeast Arkansas - 1,077     | 8. Eastern Arkansas - 215    |
| 4. *Western Arkansas              | 9. Southwest Arkansas - 891  |
| 5. West Central Arkansas - 244    | 10. Southeast Arkansas - 306 |

**#4 - \*No major layoffs or closures in this area**

## The Department of Economic Development's Long-Term Approach Complements Immediate Assistance

Regrettably, layoffs and closures are facts of life because business is cyclical. When these occur, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED) works with other members of the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force and local leaders to respond quickly and help make the best of the situation. Arkansas is the only state in the union to involve its state economic development agency in this federally mandated program.

ADED's primary mission is to create more better-paying jobs. The agency also realizes that retaining jobs is as important as recruiting new ones.

ADED's major roles with the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force are to market vacated facilities and recruit new companies to occupy them. Agency staff members visit the facilities to complete questionnaires, take digital photographs, and collect drawings and measurements of the property. They then develop building profiles with Auto CAD drawings, information sheets and promotional materials. The buildings are placed on the ADED Web site, [www.1-800-ARKANSAS.com](http://www.1-800-ARKANSAS.com), where the information is accessible to an audience of prospects around the world. The agency also displays the buildings during trade shows around the country.

ADED provides other services to assist in these unfortunate situations.

- **Lead Response:** A password-protected, online system that allows community leaders and economic developers to sub-

mit information about their available buildings and sites to new business prospects

- **Business Development:** Information on incentives, financing, customized training, permits, small and minority business development and many other questions that prospective companies may have
- **e-Match:** An online medium for any Arkansas business to sell, buy or lease excess materials, equipment or capacity
- **Existing Business Resources Team:** ADED staff members stationed throughout the state who regularly visit companies in their regions; they identify employers' needs as well as the resources available to help them grow and remain profitable

On a long-term basis, the agency's Arkansas Community of Excellence (ACE), a strategic planning process, encourages local leaders to continually work with businesses in their community so they can anticipate problems or issues the companies may be facing. This enables them to offer assistance if a company is in distress or at least not be taken off guard if trouble arises. ACE also facilitates community leaders to address workforce and industry recruitment issues in their areas.

Arkansas is fortunate that many economic development partners throughout the state at both the state and local levels work together when companies close. They all play important and necessary roles to provide the best assistance possible for Arkansas citizens.



## Governor's Dislocated Workers Affected by Jo

Haworth, Inc., an office furniture plant that opened to great fanfare in Jonesboro in 1998, announced July 28, 2004, that it would close its doors in late December 2004. Blaming overseas competition, the company said it would consolidate all its work at its Holland, Michigan, headquarters. Haworth's Arkansas plant had employed more than 300 people and was an important part of the employment picture in Jonesboro.



The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force was given advance warning by the company July 13, 2004, and Rapid Response

personnel were in immediate contact with plant management. Rapid Response specialists responded with an on-site visit within 48 hours to exchange information.

A planning meeting for the Haworth operation was held July 21 at the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce. Representatives from Haworth, the employees, local community and state Task Force attended the meeting. The Task Force explained the services that would be available to the affected workers, and the planning group developed





# Worker Task Force Helps Haworth Plant Closure

a plan of action to provide these services. Worker Assistance Workshops were held for the Haworth employees August 3- 5 to explain the services. The Task Force mobile



career unit “Hope on Wheels” was on site three days in late August to offer one-on-one consultation and computer resources to the workers.

A state Rapid Response representative filed a petition July 20 on behalf of the company to the Department of Labor. The investigation revealed that sales, production and employment at the plant were affected by overseas trade. The Department of Labor certified the petition August 24, and all workers who became separated from employment were eligible to apply for Trade Adjustment Assistance and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Two educational fairs were held September 8 for Haworth employees. Representatives from local educational facilities explained the programs available. A Trade Act/Dislocated Worker specialist was assigned from the local employment office to provide career counseling, labor market information, job placement assistance and referrals to various programs and services available to the affected workers.



## **DWE: The Educational Component**

The Department of Workforce Education (DWE) has served as the educational component of the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force since it began in 1983. DWE provides various educational services, including General Educational Development (GED) tests, adult education, WAGE programs, English as a Second Language (ESL), high tech scholarships, career and technical education and much more. As a partner in the Task Force, DWE also provided other services specifically for dislocated workers during 2004-2005.

### **Task Force Workshop Information**

DWE staff participated in 69 Task Force workshops in 2004-2005. At these workshops, DWE provided information on numerous sources of student financial aid and on postsecondary training needed or requested by the dislocated workers.

### **Career Resource Center Motor Coach – “Hope on Wheels”**

The DWE motor coaches were sent out shortly after the workshops and were conveniently located for the affected workers. They remained on site for at least two days. Each unit was equipped with 10 computers and satellite Internet service. Assisted by DWE staff, workers could prepare resumes, learn computer skills, use the Internet to search for information on jobs and training, prepare for college assessments and much more. Each attendee of the center received books, pamphlets and other information. The two coaches were located at 32 different layoffs during the year and served 496 dislocated workers.

### **Educational Fairs**

DWE organized and held educational fairs to provide information from area colleges, technical schools, and other educational partners to those dislocated workers wanting to be retrained. Educational fairs were held for 10 companies during the year.

### **ASSET and COMPASS Assessments**

DWE is approved to administer the ASSET or COMPASS (assessments) to dislocated workers wanting to enroll in college. The free



assessments were administered to about 250 workers during the year.

### **Career Resource Center**

DWE operated a long-term Career Resource Center in McCrory during the program year 2004-2005. The center is a self-contained computer classroom equipped with 20 computers integrated with the latest software. The Career Resource Center was used to as-



sist 57 dislocated workers of American Greeting Corporation, PolyOne Corporation, and RBX Industries. Taking these Career Resource Centers to the dislocated workers in the affected areas allowed the workers to take advantage

of learning opportunities, such as resume writing, interviewing techniques, appropriate dress, computer software skills, and much more. The goal was to enhance the workers' educational and employability skills and make them more prepared for today's job market.

### **Dislocated Workers Informational Web Page**

DWE created and maintained, as part of its main Web site, a section on dislocated workers. The Web page has more than 50 links to several hundred federal, state and local agencies and many other useful sites. The information is provided in four main categories – employment, education, human services and consumer services. This information may be viewed at <http://arkansas.gov/GDWTF/index.html>.

### **Technical Assistance**

DWE staff shared with dislocated workers a local telephone number and a toll-free number to call for vital information following the workshops, motor coach events, job fairs, trade assistance workshops and educational fairs. More than 250 callers took advantage of the technical assistance the staff offered to resolve issues or get referrals to other agencies.



# Alan White Company

## Task Force Helps a Small Town

A furniture manufacturer that had employed more than 10 percent of the population of a southern Arkansas town for nearly half a century announced April 30, 2005, it would shut its doors by July 1. When the Alan White Company, a major manufacturer that opened its plant in Stamps in 1956, told its 224 employees of its plans, the town of 2,131 people was sent reeling by the news.

The announcement came almost a year to the date of a layoff at the plant. At that time, the company had laid off 125 employees, calling it temporary. It was waiting for a large order and needed the layoff until the contract came in. When the company was not able to recall those workers within 90 days, the layoff was handled as a permanent one, and the workers were invited to attend a Workers Assistance Workshop for information on services available to them.

Three union employees filed a petition in October 2004 with the U.S. Department of Labor to qualify for additional services under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act of 2002. The company was certified under the act December 15. Those workers who were not recalled were given additional services for training and job placement.





After receiving news this past spring of the company's closure, the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force contacted Alan White and met May 5 with company representatives to explain its services. A planning meeting was held five days later in which the company, union, and community leaders discussed Worker Assistance Workshops and other services for the affected workers.

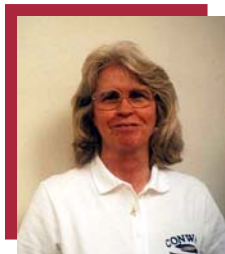
A decision was made for the Task Force to provide a workshop June 3 in the lunchroom of the Lafayette County Schools. Representatives from local and state agencies explained available services, such as retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, stress counseling, insurance needs and social service programs.

The mobile career unit "Hope on Wheels" was made available to the employees for three days at the plant prior to the closure. Education fairs were held June 10 and again July 7.

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force, Magnolia Economic Development Corporation and the Golden Triangle Economic Development Council held a luncheon and employer meeting to encourage area employers to hire the highly desirable Alan White workers. The Golden Triangle Economic Development board and the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force also held a job fair for the affected workers. More than 50 employees attended and applied with local employers. One employer took more than 100 applications at Alan White prior to the job fair.

As a result of the TAA certification, two information sessions were held for Alan White employees July 21. At these sessions, the Task Force explained additional services available and procedures for applying for those benefits. Those services included more funding for retraining, transportation and subsistence, job search, health tax credit and relocation allowances.

## Dislocated Workers Discover Opportunity in Plant Closure



For nearly three decades, Barbara Bivens of Vilonia thought she had a secure job at Carrier Refrigeration. When the plant closed, she wanted to go to college so she could do something different with her life. But she had two big obstacles she wasn't sure she could overcome – finding the money for college and

getting over the fact that she hadn't been in a classroom for more than 30 years.

Upon attending a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) meeting, Barbara was convinced she could overcome these obstacles. She enrolled in the WAGE program to brush up on her math, English and reading skills and earned her employability and clerical certificates. Task Force staff explained her financial benefits and helped her apply to the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton (UACCM). She was happy to learn that she had done so well in the WAGE program that she did not need any remedial classes in college.

As part of her coursework, Barbara completed a 200-hour internship with the Conway Sanitation Department. After she graduated with honors with an associate degree in business, she went to work full-time at the department's Scale House. Without the help of the TAA, WAGE and Task Force staff, Barbara says she would not have gone to college. "I am very appreciative of the opportunity I was given," she adds, "and all the people involved in helping me."

For Barbara, the Task Force and its services transformed the closing of her plant into the opening of a brand new life. Barbara is not alone in this transformation. All across the state, Arkansans can thank the Task Force for opening the door to a new career and a world of opportunity.

Julianne McNamee, a fellow worker at Carrier, used her tuition assistance to go to Southeast College of Technology, where she trained to be a medical assistant. After graduating with honors, Julianne went to work as a physical therapy tech at Conway Therapy Services. She says she is blessed to get to work with a team of such loving and caring people.



Betty McCoy, who had worked at Levi Strauss for 11 years, says a small window of opportunity opened for her when the plant closed. That window grew much bigger when she found out about the TAA program, which enabled her to go back to school. She now works at the Conway Regional Surgical Center.



When he got his pink slip from Carrier, Anton Rappold used the TAA program to complete two semesters in refrigeration at UACCM. He says the certificate he earned has given him a big boost in his new position as maintenance supervisor at the Morrilton Healthcare Center.



Deborah Donald was another 11-year veteran at the Levi Strauss plant when it closed its doors. By helping her with tuition, fees, supplies, a computer and childcare, the TAA program enabled her to go to school at UACCM. Today, she is an admission secretary at that community college.

Dawn Robnett used the TAA program to fulfill her dream of going to nursing school. "It was difficult at times but very worthwhile and has become a very fulfilling career," she says. When she graduated, she received the faculty award at Baptist Health School of Nursing. Another big reward came on her first day on the job in her new career when she was making twice the hourly wage she had made after 18 years at Levi Strauss.

# Letter of Appreciation



Billy Vanlandingham  
Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force  
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services  
P.O. Box 2981  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

Dear Mr. Vanlandingham:

I wanted to write to express our appreciation to you and the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force and the local ESD office for the assistance that was provided to our members during the closure of the Haworth facility in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Everyone – including you, Linda Slater of the Task Force, Judy Duncan and staff at ESD – was a tremendous help for our members during this difficult time.

The workshops, the educational fair and the on-site Mobile Career Resource Center for training and job search provided services to our members that were instrumental to their future success in the job market. We were very fortunate that the State of Arkansas recognized our needs and provided these services; they represented a great complement to the services that Haworth independently provided to our members.

Many of our members were able to take advantage of the TAA (Trade Adjustment Assistance) benefits and are improving their skills and pursuing new careers in the job market due to the educational benefits that they received. Their lives and the lives of their families have been improved forever because of these benefits. The assistance of the local ESD office and the Task Force helped members to take full advantage of this benefit.



Once again, thank you, the Task Force, ESD and the State of Arkansas for providing the care and information to Haworth members from the very beginning and until today as many continue pursuing their careers in various educational programs.

Sincerely,  
*Joanne Iwan*

Haworth, Inc  
Holland, Michigan 72404



The Career Resource Center motor coaches house information and computer programs can use to jumpstart a career search, access training possibilities and assess skill levels and career interests.

The Task Force drives these centers to worksites prior to a layoff or closure or to a convenient central location following a company closure.



Many workers affected by the closure of the Haworth facility in Jonesboro used the center for training and to search for their next job.

# Letter of Appreciation

September 30, 2005

Mr. Artee Williams  
Director, Department of Workforce Services

Dear Mr. Williams:

Speaking on behalf of the communities of southwest Arkansas, I want to thank you and the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force for the amazing effort your group expended to assist us during the closure of the Alan White furniture manufacturing plant. While the Alan White workforce was certainly the most disadvantaged group, our local communities also would have become economically disadvantaged had the two hundred plus unemployed workers been left unassisted and on their own.

However, on June 23, 2005, members of the Task Force, along with other speakers assembled by your group, put forth a skillful and knowledgeable presentation to community, industry and political leaders regarding the advantages of hiring the dislocated worker. Of particular importance was that the businesses represented at both the presentation and at the job fair were not just of local origin but were from across much of southwest Arkansas. The presentation was well received by the entire group, and I think the job fair, which was held the following week for the dislocated workers, was more successful because of it. Employers in need of good employees took many job applications from the former Alan White workers who were in attendance at the job fair. It has been more than ninety days since the presentation, and we are still hearing positive responses.

I hope you will share our appreciation with all who participated in the presentation and in the job fair, as I know that I cannot know them all in order to thank them personally.

Respectfully,

David Stalnaker  
Acting Director  
Magnolia Economic Development Corporation



# Letter of Appreciation

October 3, 2005

Lillian Pace  
Communications Director  
Congressman Marion Berry

Mr. Billy Vanlandingham,  
Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force  
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Dear Mr. Vanlandingham,

I am writing to congratulate the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force for another successful year at helping Arkansas workers find new employment opportunities. Thanks to your services, thousands of workers across our state were able to adapt to changing economic conditions and avoid the difficulties of long-term unemployment.

You have left a lasting impact in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District where we watched 23 companies undergo layoffs or closures during the past year. Task Force representatives held workshops, provided job advice and updated workers on available positions with other companies. I am confident that the 1,334 workers in Northeast Arkansas your Task Force helped this year are grateful for all your insight and commitment to keeping the workforce sound.

I wish the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force well in the coming years and look forward to working with you to provide the best possible work placement services for Arkansas' workforce. The best way to remain competitive is to continue investing in the men and women who keep our economy strong.

Sincerely,  
Marion Berry  
Member of Congress

# Letter of Appreciation

TO: Christene Long  
FROM: Johnny Gammill, Southwest Airline Employee  
SUBJECT: Visit to RV Event for Southwest Airlines

I want to thank you for your hospitality and very cordial welcome when I visited with you at the RV/CRC. You were very professional and extremely helpful with the information that I was provided. And I appreciate the time you spent with me to answer questions and actually use the online information on the Web site.

I did visit the Arkansas Workforce Center office in University Mall as you suggested and was able to speak with Ms. Conita Ferguson. Ms. Ferguson was able to discuss the status of dislocated Southwest Airlines workers and provide information on possible "WIA" funds for educational benefits that is a top priority for me. I received the initial mailing information yesterday that she mentioned in our visit. I am interested in the Web design program offered by ITEC in Little Rock to pursue a career opportunity in Internet technology. I will visit ITEC today to discuss the Web design program and get information from them for my application to request funds since, thanks to you, we were able to verify that ITEC is an approved school for the program in Internet technology.

Thank you again, Ms. Long, for all you did to assist me. I hope to see you again in the future. And I will be grateful for any contact by e-mail for any further suggestions that you might have in this career transition.

Sincerely,

Johnny Gammill  
Southwest Airlines Company  
Customer Sales Supervisor and Staffing Leader

# Letter of Appreciation

Sonny Scott  
Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force  
2020 W. Third, Room 220  
Little Rock, AR 72205

Dear Sonny,

I would just like to say how much I appreciate your efforts in getting the Workers Training Unit located here in McCrory for the benefit of our people who lost their jobs due to American Greetings closing its plant here. This was a very difficult time for the 324 workers who lost their source of livelihood. All of the services that were provided by the Governor's Task Force were very much appreciated. I'm sure that many people benefited from the training module being made available to them.

It was nice making your acquaintance and working with you. I want to say again how much I appreciate what you did and all the other folks with the Task Force in making our transition as smooth as possible.

Regards,  
Doyle W. Fowler  
Mayor, City of McCrory

## Testimonials

“On May 25, I am taking the ACT.... My daughter had gotten me some sample ACTs from UB at Harding. I did parts of them too, and I am proud to say I did as well or better than she did on her test. She is a straight A student! I guess Mom is not dumb after all. Thank you for the practice tests.”

-- Wendy Gray, Searcy  
*Dislocated Kohler Worker*

“I consider it blessed to be retrained for another job through TAA. Without the program, I am sure I could not have found the job I have at present.... Many thanks to those who made it possible.”

-- Anna Smith, Conway  
*Dislocated Worker*

“If it had not been for the TAA program, I would never have gotten this opportunity (to pursue a practical nursing degree). Thank you.”

-- Loretta Moore  
*Dislocated Levi Strauss Worker*

“The services provided through TAA were instrumental and necessary for me to complete LPN school.... These services should be available to anyone who has a determination to succeed in life.”

--Candis Clemons  
*Dislocated Levi Strauss Worker*

“Upon Levi’s closure, TAA assisted me in continuing my education. I am now employed in a medical office and out of factory work.”

--Tracey Canady  
*Dislocated Levi Strauss Worker*